

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

SAJ-01 /070 W

----- 093846

R 261330Z JUL 75 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3543
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO

SUBJ: NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS OPENS

REF: LISBON 4076

SUMMARY: NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS CONVENED BY INTERSINDICAL
OPENED JULY 25 FOR THREE DAY SESSION. CONGRESS PROMOTING EXPECTED
THEMES OF CLASS STRUGGLE, ANTI-CAPITALISM, ANTI-IMPERIALISM.
LABOR MINISTER COSTA MARTINS SPOKE OF WORKER'S SACRIFICES NECESSARY
TO BUILD SOCIALISM. CONGRESS CANCELS SCHEDULED PUBLIC SESSION.

END SUMMARY:

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1. A THREE DAY NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS, ORGANIZED BY INTERSINDICAL, OPENED IN LISBON JULY 25 WITH CLAIMED REPRESENTATION FROM APPROXIMATELY 200 UNIONS. CONGRESS OPEN TO ALL UNIONS, WHETHER OR NOT AFFILIATED WITH INTERSINDICAL, BUT PRO-COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP OF INTERSINDICAL CLEARLY IN CONTROL.

2. OPENING SESSION SET TONE OF CONGRESS, WITH EMPHASIS ON UNITY OF WORKING CLASS IN STRUGGLE AGAINST CAPITALISTS AND IMPERIALISTS. KEYNOTE SPEAKER MANUEL LOPEZ ADMITTED THAT IT WAS EASIER TO OBTAIN UNITY AGAINST FASCISM THAN TO MAINTAIN IT DURING STRUGGLE TO TRANSFORM SOCIETY. SPEECH WAS HARDLINE MARXIST EXPOSITION OF FUNDAMENTAL CLASS STRUGGLE, WITH DIATRIBE AGAINST "PLURALISM" AND IN FAVOR OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM.

3. LABOR MINISTER COSTA MARTINS' SPEECH NOTED THAT PRIOR TO APRIL 25 REVOLUTION, WORKERS' DEMANDS WERE ORIENTED TOWARD WAGES, HOURS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS. IN CONTRAST, NEW TENDENCY IS FOR DESTRUCTION OF MONOPOLISTIC, CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM. CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM IS DIFFICULT TASK AND REQUIRES SACRIFICES FROM WORKERS. NEWLY FORMED NATIONAL COMMISSION ON WORKING HOURS WILL ISSUE REGULATIONS TO REDUCE "DISTORTIONS" IN WORK WEEK. (COMMENT: THIS WILL RESULT IN ADDED HOURS FOR SOME HERETOFORE PRIVILEGED BANK WORKERS.) MINISTER SPOKE OF URGENT NEED FOR ADDED GOVERNMENTAL INVESTMENT TO OFFSET LACK OF PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND TO CREATE NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. COSTA MARTINS CLAIMED THAT LABOR MINISTRY IS FUNDAMENTALLY NON-PARTISAN AND THAT ON BECOMING MINISTER HE HAD REQUESTED EACH PARTY TO SUBMIT CANDIDATES FOR SENIOR POSITIONS. IMPLIED IT NOT HIS FAULT IF SOME PARTIES NOT FORTHCOMING, AND THAT PARTICIPATION IN MINISTRY STILL OPEN TO THOSE INTERESTED IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS OF WORKERS.

4. CONGRESS VOTED DOWN A PROPOSAL TO DELAY PROCEEDINGS UNTIL OCTOBER. THE INTENT OF THIS MOTION WAS TO POSTPONE THE ELECTION OF THE NEW INTERSINDICAL DIRECTORATE UNTIL AFTER INTERNAL UNION ELECTIONS ARE HELD DURING AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER. CONSIDERING THE DOMINATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS BY INTERSINDICAL, IT IS SURPRISING THAT THE MOTION WAS EVEN ALLOWED TO BE PRESENTED. THE CONGRESS ALSO VOTED TO DOUBLE UNION ASSESSMENTS DUE TO INTERSINDICAL, FROM THREE TO SIX PERCENT, AND TO CANCEL THE CLOSING SESSION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THE CONGRESS, WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN HELD IN LISBON BULL-RING AND OPEN TO PUBLIC. REASONS GIVEN FOR CANCELLATION WAS SO THAT WORKERS COULD BE CONSTANTLY AVAILABLE FOR MOBILIZATION FOR REVOLUTIONARY VIGILANCE AND TRAFFIC CONTROL. CARLUCCI

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SOCIALISM, LABOR STRIKES, COMMUNISTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975LISBON04223
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750259-0567
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750718/aaaaapxx.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LISBON 4076
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <24 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATIONAL LABOR CONGRESS OPENS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PO, (MARTINS, COSTA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006